olume VII Chicago, Ill., April, 1930 Number 1

The Liberal

APRIL

April is here!
There's a song in the maple, thrilling and new;
There's a flash of wings of heaven's own hue;
There's a veil of green on the nearer hills;
There's a burst of rapture in woodland rills;
There are stars in the meadow dropped here and there;
There's a breath of arbutus in the air;
There's a dash of rain, as if flung in jest;
There's an arch of color spanning the west;
April is here!

—Eben E. Rexford.

Published monthly by

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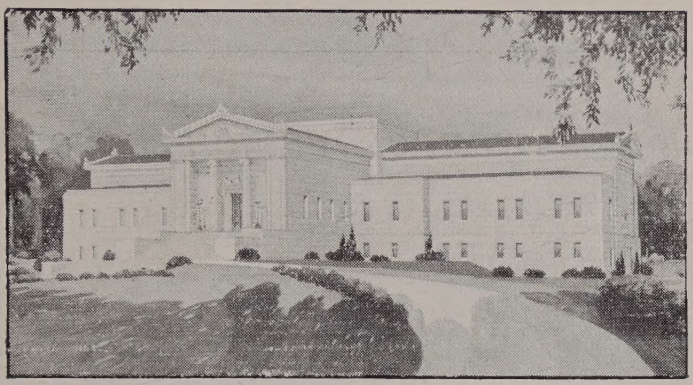

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"The purpose of the church is to deal in plain terms with the supreme things in human life as measured by the rational conclusions of science and history. It seeks to promote a conception of nature, history and the meaning of life in accordance with the facts of experience and with the progress of growing knowledge. It is essentially religious, not in the traditional but in the scientific and ethical sense of the word. It regards religion as spiritual energy directing itself toward the enrichment of the individual life and the perfection of the social order. This church assumes the right of every one to think his or her own thoughts, and expects the greatest progress to follow from entire intellectual liberty and perfect freedom of judgment. It welcomes to its membership all who wish to co-operate in making a world which shall be enlightened by knowledge, guided by reason and animated by good-will."

THE LIBERAL

Preston Bradley ..... Editor

Grace Thayer Bradley ..... Associate Editor

Volume VII Chicago, Ill., April, 1930 Number 1

MEDITATION

We would direct the unity of our minds and the gladness of our hearts into one expression of appreciation and beauty, that in spite of all the physical discouragements about us, in spite of all the leaden skies and the mists of fogs, in spite of all the darkness and the cold, we can break through every external barrier that separates us from the triumphant light and life and beauty of love and truth and peace and experience in our hearts and in our lives the glorious vitality and the supreme dynamic of a continuous and an ever-enlarging life.

May the one thought and the one inspiration that shall dominate every heart within the influence of this service today be one of renewed energy, awakened and aroused vigor, an approach to the maturities of the seasons of seed time and harvest that will enable us to do so well in garnering the fruit and the grain of the gardens and the fields of our lives that we shall have that consciousness that in spite of all that has happened or can happen to us we have performed the mission of life on a high and lofty altitude. May all of us who are in the radiance of the service today have our hearts quickened and the depth of our souls enlarged by the consciousness of that fundamental and supreme truth of the everlasting existence of the life principle and the life force. May each of us feel so much alive today; may it be a day of dynamics; may it be a day when heart and brain together will surge and sweep and vibrate in one great pulsating unit for life, life which spells opportunity, life which spells tomorrow, life which spells reorganization and readjustment of our forces, life which links us up with the deep responsibility of living, life which gives us an added realization of the significance of that responsibility.

And so today, in an exultant mood, with our hearts and our voices framing words of song and truth and beauty and strength, we would be the instrument through which would pass to all those who do not have the thrill of awakened and renewed life today, to all those who see nothing in the morning but the darkened skies, to all those who are experiencing the depth and the pathos and the tragedy of the loss of loved ones, to that lovely heart—the information has just reached us—a friend and lovely character of this church, to that young lady who, in the last hours of this Easter morn, surrendered that which was physical and that which was of earth, to the Eternal Heart of Infinite Life____may the heart of that mother be comforted____to all who suffer or who are in pain or who are listening in hospitals or who are listening anywhere, the weak, the sick, the discouraged—may this Easter morning find some basis in their lives for a change for the better. May health come back, love come back, friends come

back. Wherever life has been saddened and made gloomy by failure and distress, may we see upon this Easter morning the glory and the beauty of things, not as they were but things as they are going to be. And may every heart here and every heart listening have a new birth of courage on Easter, with the affirmation that life is made for beauty and for truth and that we cannot be defeated if we put ourselves in harmony with the love of the infinite and the eternal.

May this be a service of triumph, of encouragement, and may every life go out from this congregation today, and when our radio friends stop their radios may they leave them with the thrill of the dyamic of living, and may they enter into the activities of the week renewed, strengthened and encouraged for the noble experience and the great adventure of living life.

VICTORY

The Easter Sermon By Dr. Bradley. Stenographically Reported.

In the some what abbreviated sermon which I am going to preach this morning I have in mind doing one or two things in regard to the entire thought of Easter which I haven't attempted before and I am not going to intrude under the territory that I hope to cover tonight in a more exhaustive treatment from a scientific and philosophical point of view in the entire subject of life after death.

I am aware of that fact, that this is always an occasion, particularly in that branch of religion known as orthodox Christianity, where the minister and the priest utilize it as an opportunity for a substantiation or a verification of the survival of personality and the physical resurrection of the body. I do not propose in my sermon of this Easter morning to touch those matters at all. If I do go into them it will be in the evening service. I rather, this morning, plan to tell you what Easter means to me, not as a preacher, not as a pastor of the Peoples Church, but what is means to me as a human being, just an ordinary human being, what this whole theme of Easter significance means for me.

Of course in the telling of that it will be necessary for me to, perhaps, draw conclusions or deductions that to some of you may seem a little bit harsh, or at any rate somewhat unusual. But there is one thing, I think, which all of us admire, whether we agree with a man or not, we cannot help but admire a man who really is true to his convictions. It would be impossible for me to stand in this pulpit on this Easter Sunday morning and to this magnificent challenge which faces me be less than what I conceive the real Easter to be. I cannot compromise and fit the occasion into any traditions or any inherited notions as to what constitutes the real importance of this Easter time. In other words I cannot accept any of the literalism associated with the story of the Easter time. I do not deem it necessary in order to have a fundamental awareness as a what constitutes the great value of life to believe in the actual physical demonstration of any physical character whatsoever in passing into the experience of death or resurrection; and the fundamental truths of Easter time are, it seems to me, not dependent upon a pure literalism of a great episode nineteen centuries ago. Easter time is a great time of renewal to me. And it seems to me that I capture that sense of renewal not from any

theological implications of religion but from the great unalterable process of nature, for Easter is much older than Christianity. The people of the world were having festivals of Easter centuries before Jesus ever was born, and these festivals in the Anglo-Saxon world and in the old Teuton practices were all of them dedicated to the Goddess Eostre, from which Easter gets its name. The word Easter does not even possess a religious significance, as every student of etymology knows. The word Easter itself is the name of an ancient Goddess, who was the Goddess of the month of April, which was the returning life month of the seasons and with the passing of the sun over Capricorn, on its way back to the sigma where it dwelt during the summer months, and it brought with it a renewal of life and the external world that seems so dead and so cold and so lifeless was warmed into being by the heart of the returning sun. The people of all the hemispheres that were so influenced by this returning sun had the Easter festival as the beginning of that renewal of life.

Then there was the time when there was injected into it all the beautiful practices that are identified with child life, of the Easter egg, the rabbits and the other manifestations of pagan influences, all of which have come into the practise of Easter entirely uninfluenced by any of the Christian ethnic. But as time went on religion sought and religion expressed this same principle of nature, that a man's life might be frozen by the winters of hate, that a man's soul might be chilled by the winters of animosity and failure, that the winter of discontent could set in in human life and with the coming of the winter of our souls there would be all of its associated and attendent influences of darkness, of disintegration, of despair, and sometimes with some of us of ultimate tragedy.

Then it was that the heart of the world was warmed anew by the sunlight from the unimpeachable personality of the Poet of Galilee, and He, with that depth of understanding of our tragedies, an appreciation of the winter of our souls, an understanding of the dismal tragedies of our lives, was then able to bring that renewal of life in the splendid physical presence and spiritual application of His benign and lovely personality, and so affectedly did He enter into the remedial life of the people of Palestine and those who knew Him and loved Him best, that when the cruelty of Rome reached its climax in the tragedy of Golgotha, they said, "We cannot let Him die." And very soon in the history of the Christian tradition, when that principle of death had apparently and obviously operated in the physical structure of this Poet and Love of Humanity; then as the years went on, the stories of the missing of His body, of it being lost and unaccounted for, the bribery of the Roman soldier who went back to the palace of the Caesars and said, "He has been stolen by his followers,"—all of the great varieties of historical study that has been brought to this event in the life of Jesus in order to substantiate a physical manifestation of a violation of a fundamental principle in the universe of the world, all of this gradually deepened, unheard of the first three centuries of religion, but all of it gradually deepened until the final associations that had localized the entire principle of survival and immortality upon the structure of one single event in the life of the Poet.

To me such literalness destroys its power; for the real fact of the Easter time is not physical at all; it has nothing to do with the material; it is predominately and pre-eminently of spiritual consequence. And what is that? Ask a man who looks at a bulb of the florist's after the plant has bloomed and he puts the bulb away to

rest. I used to think of it of my own mother, who was fond of calla lilies and who loved calla lilies and understood the nature of calla lilies and who was able to produce some of the most beautiful specimens of that particular lily that I have ever seen. I remember my mother gathering up the bulbs of her calla lilies and putting them, as she used to say to me, to rest. She said, "I am putting my calla lily bulbs away to rest." And if you were to pick up one of those bulbs, by no analysis whatsoever even of the finest botanist, would you be able to see any single evidence of life. To all purposes of the physical the bulb was dead, but nature says no. The great Easter fact to me is that the rebuke of nature, to you and to me, when we have an idea that we stand in the presence of death, nature rebukes us for that, for in the whole world of life and the whole world of nature, where is death?

Life has always been a continuous progression. There is no place in nature for death on its eternal character. A modification of environmental influences of the spirit of man is what takes place with that which we call the appearance of death; but man is not going into eternity. You and I do not die to live, we live to live. Man is not going to eternity, man is in eternity, and the only thing that happens at death under these deductions of what seem to me have the semblance of philosophic sanity, death when it comes to you and to me and even to our loved ones can't be anything more nor less than a change of environmental influences for the spirit of man. So instead of making ourselves more theological philosophical difficulties by attempting to establish the literalism of any one experience in the race, why not accept the real summum bonum of the Easter message to realize the fact that you yourself are life.

The thrill that will come to every heart with which no other thrill can ever be compared comes when an individual wakens to this fact, that I am life. To come to an awareness of life is the greatest thrill that can ever come to a human heart—I am life. And because you live you live immortally. You may attempt suicide to answer the problem; you may die of neglect of yourself for the adventure, there is one thing you can't do with life and that is you can never destroy it. That is the one lesson of Easter. That is the one truth of this moment. It will adapt itself to new modifications in the realm of science; it will produce more of the elements of reality. You will find it manifesting itself in all sorts of electronic manifestations in the world of nature. This etal, the life spark, that is what you have now in your hearts.

I care not whether you are Jew or Roman Catholic or atheist or Unitarian or Episcopalian or whatever may be your particular religious emphasis today, there is one great common territory that we all occupy and that is we are a part of the immortal etal, the life of life, the life of life! And in the task of living that life with the personalities which you and I possess and to have it dawn upon us—sometimes it sweeps over me with a consciousness that is almost indescribable, I have no way to interpret it. Sometimes I feel as if I wanted to flee to an organ to do it—that would be tragic! And then sometimes I feel as though I wanted to sing to do it and from my radio friends I learn that would be still more tragic. Sometimes I think, perhaps I could do it with a pen or with a brush; but sometimes when there sweeps over me this consciousness that I feel of eternity, not something to be afraid of, I am not afraid of eternity; not something to be hysterical over, not at all; but to realize that I am and you are an eternal

soul. That is the deepest realization that can come to a life. And then to associate that with the fact that there isn't anything in the world that can be done to us, nothing, that will permanently defeat the immortal soul, wrapped up in a human life, nothing! That is the meaning of Easter.

Hate did its worst in the Roman Empire, did its very worst. Hate was on the throne and lowliness was in the street and hate did its worst to that Nazarene and on Good Friday it was jovial. It said, "We have won." Lust can do its worst. Hate, failure, collapse, suffering, death, these things can come into our lives and they can so crush and burden and stifle, and then—Easter. Do you know what Easter is? Why, Easter is the everlasting and eternal triumph of everlasting good! That is what it is. Easter says to you, has hate tried to wreck your life? have friends despised you and lied about you? has illness overtaken your bodies? was the winter of your discontent great and long? has the storm swept over your soul? have all these things come to you? Why, don't you know it is Easter? Don't you see in the realization of this moment that the only triumph which evil, disaster, death, disease, hate, envy, lust, that the only triumph which these things ever have over you is a temporary triumph? Can't you see the great truth of Easter?

This in the end, and O could I sink this into your hearts, every heart here; skeptic, cynic, sophisticated, could I sink this into your hearts; orthodox Jew, atheist, could I sink this into your hearts, could I make this the outstanding moment of your Easter time, this truth: good, truth, beauty, have survival values and in the end of every experience they will ultimately triumph. Bad never had anything but a temporary success. Dishonor is as transient as the dew. Cleverness has never yet triumphed over merit. Bluff has never yet permanently surmounted worth. The great business of living is the business of refining and verifying and when you are all through with the experience of life, you will find this as the Easter heart, that in the end, wherever good has been, good remains; wherever life has been, life remains, for life was made to be victorious. Don't you see that? If you cannot see it look at the grass and it will tell you. If you cannot fathom it, walk amongst the orchards where the blossoms are and they will sing it to you. If you do not believe it stand by the lilies and listen to their music. If you do not believe it, look, look to the dawn.

Do you think because it is cloudy today and because the sky is in tears, do you think today that there is no sun? Do you think today that because there is leaden canopy over our heads, do you think there is no blue? Do you think that reality is ever disturbed by appearanc?

Enshrine, my dear friends, is the last note of my Easter message. Enshrine in your lives. I ask you a new dedication to the imperishable truth that goodness is never defeated in the world, that hate will kill itself and that love will send you ceaselessly swinging on through the eons of tomorrow and tomorroy and tomorrow and tomorrow. In the eternity we are, and when the physical of this identity is gone there will be another and when that has gone there will be another, for life is life and God is life and life is eternal. Therefore, let us live it as though we know it is.

MEDITATION

Infinite and Eternal Heart, at the close of this day of gladness and of great joy, a great company of us have come together again and for a little while we are going to walk on the sunlit places of the soul, and may we have that perfect vision, that clear understanding, the sobriety of judgment that will enable us to make some contribution tonight to the turmoil and havoc of human life. We ask tonight, as we approach the throne of the Eternal and the Infinite, that we might do it with sanctity of life and that where we have been wrong we may be forgiven, where we have been unkind and misunderstanding we may practise kindness and understanding.

Tonight, as there leaps out across the clouds of the night that which binds the stars, may there go to every heart, every life, an inspiration and a joy that we have that experience of life, and to all those tonight, anywhere, who are stricken with sorrow and who are saddened and discouraged, may there be some influence of this service that shall touch them very deeply, very closely. May we, as we try to face this responsibility from week to week, do it to the very summit of our lives. May we have strength; may we have health; may we have idealism; may we have friends; may we have love, that these may mold themselves into one mighty inspiration as we attempt to break this bread to these who listen and who are here.

As these Sunday evening services come to a close, out yonder in "Radioland," everywhere, and in all the myriads of places our voice has gone this winter, may they remember us; may they have tonight remembrance, and may they sometimes when it is stormy in their lives and when it is dark and when they are in trouble, may they go back to something in our service, some thought, some note of music, some word of prayer, some utterance of the preacher that shall help them in those hours of darkness and turmoil.

To all our sick tonight, to all our shut-ins, to all that have had no gladness today, we would sympathize with them and if possible we would bring to them tonight, out of the storm, out of the sky that weeps, we would bring to them the assurance that somewhere, the sun is really shining and that if we endure but for the moment it will shine again for us in the lives of all who are in darkness. May the blessing of love and of peace abide in all of our hearts until that day breaketh that shall know no shadows, neither shall there be any night nor any pain but the day of infinite love and of strength and of everlasting rest.

WHY I BELIEVE IN IMMORTALITY

A Sermon Delivered in The Peoples Church Easter Evening. Stenographically Reported.

We have come tonight to the parting of the ways as far as our Sunday evening services are concerned; with the service tonight they come to a close for the season and will be resumed again next season in this church. I approach the end of these services with a great deal of reluctance, with enthusiasm and encouragement. I approach them from another point of view gladly. I am glad that they are coming to a close tonight from the standpoint of sheer physical weariness. I do not think I have ever been more weary in all the eighteen years I have been in this pulpit than I am tonight. This address which I am attempting will be the thirteenth sermon which I have preached since last Monday and the third that I have delivered today, and were it not for the splendid anticipation and that lovely personality which these audiences here in the Peoples Church invariably and inevitably crystallize and send up to me by way of inspiration with this great subject which I have tonight, it would be utterly impossible and I would feel myself wholly and totally incompetent and inadequate to discuss this great theme.

I have chosen to call the subject tonight, "Why I Believe in Immortality," for two specific purposes. The first is I had supposed in the mere announcement and the mere publicity of the subject upon the hearts of a great many whom I have cause to believe have doubted my belief in immortality, that they might see that I have stated the subject in a positive attitude, "Why I Believe in Immortality." Not in any way am I attempting to discuss it on the basis of speculation that might come from the realm of science, but I am talking about belief, why I believe in immortality. The next reason is because I believe that probably there are no greater problems that are so demanding of men and women than this problem of whether we live again, whether the soul is immortal, and what immortality is, if it is anything at all, or is death s l e e p, dreamless and endless sleep, or is it life, perfect unending life?

From the earliest beginnings of the human struggle the mental anguish which has always attended man's progression has manifest itself. He has been asking this question and he has been attempting an answer and the answer has been modified a n d largely regulated by the degree of his intelligence and by his understanding of the universe in which he is a part. He has spent most of his time in an effort to concretely verify life after death on the standards of the physical universe of which he knows so much, which has resulted in an effort on the part of various organizations which have to do with the psychical and the metaphysical and the experimental in every country in the world, in every age of history, to develop a technique whereby, through mediumship, through some sort of manifestation of a supernatural beginning, through into the natural about us, man has attempted to answer the question if the dead live and if we are immortal.

I do not attempt, ladies and gentlemen, tonight to go into this territory, all of which is very much disputed, into the realm of pure psychic phenomena which bases thought of death upon the basis of suspended animation, or the basis of thought of death upon the continuity of consciousness, or to discuss the relationships be-

tween the functions of the brain and the institution known as the mind or to enter into a scientific discussion or study or argument upon the basis that the moment these little brain cells of mine cease to reverberate in my body and the body itself dies and the personality expires with the body, because personality has no way in which to function without physical constituency which has carried it through the years of existence, that that is the end of life. I do not propose tonight to go into those matters. In the first place, I think that it is utterly impossible for science, no matter what branch of science you may choose or designate as the medium thru which you attempt the verification, to prove or disprove immortality.

I do not think that there has been introduced unimpeachable evidence which will stand the test of a real scholastic, a real penetrative mind, that does not possess in the test somewhere, a discrepancy that injects into the test an element of speculation. There may be all sorts of results but the element of speculation still maintains. So that the best scientific minds of the world and the very finest institutions of scientific research and of physical research are none of them today dogmatic upon this aspect of immortality from this particular point of view. So I am not looking, tonight, to the territory of science, science which to me is an observation of fact and designation of principle then thru designation of that principle the discovery of a law which cannot be abrogated, cannot be rescinded, cannot be changed by any human institution whatsoever. Science is primarily an observer. Science is not concerned with origin. The scientist is really not concerned with the origin of life and the scientists do not go back of life as the beginning of their thesis. When we go over into the realm of experimentalization in the realm of science to prove the existence of this principle of immortality, we are getting into a territory that immediately removes the whole problem out of environment and away from the technique that it is most deeply associated with and understands the best.

Neither am I interested tonight in attempting to disprove immortality on the basis of materialistic science. There are those in the world of science who utter ridiculous asininities to any observations about immortality that are entirely beyond their ken and entirely beyond any experiental relationship as well as any experimental relationship. Science primarily deals with the experimental relationships; immortality has to do with the experiential relationships of life. So I am going to depart immediately from the territory of science as such, and if you expected me tonight to prove immortality, then you are going to be disappointed; if you expected me tonight to disprove immortality on the same technique, then you are going to be disappointed as well.

I take the whole subject away from that limited confined territory that exists in the pure realm of the scientific into another territory, into the territory not of a misty misticism, not of an unrefined conception of the supernatural in life, but out into that territory of the heart. Immediately the real finely disciplined mind may react unfavorably to any conclusions that I might make upon the subject of immortality because I take it out of the territory of an attempt to prove it or disprove it by demonstration, by science, by manipulation, by any of the psychic processes the processes of psychic phenomena that have been utilized so frequently by the untutored and the poorly disciplined. I want to take it into another territory which to me is a vaster realm, a territory

that has such a spaciousness about it, such a magnitude that it overwhelms and it overpowers. Not the territory of emotionalism; not the territory of feeling, purely; not even the territory of the will; not the fact that you and I are the recipients of millions of years of evolutionary process until a racial inheritance has come to us which speaks of the will to live, not merely because we feel that immortality must be, or the universe and all that is in it is a colossal gest of some cosmic gesture—not in the territory of pure emotionalism would I take you, but into the borderland, that borderland of experiential relationships whereby we can authenticate our opinions upon the basis of intuitional knowledge just as certainly, as accurately, and as scientifically as upon the basis of experimental knowledge or the knowledge which has come to the realm of fact based upon a disputable program of investigation and of thought.

Why I believe in immortality! I know that I am the heritage, and so are you, of the race. I know that in our little pilgrimage from the cradle to the grave each of us passes through the rapidity of civilization. I know that I have no awareness of any previous existence prior to my birth, that I have no consciousness which anticipates that age of accountability that dawned upon me at three or four. I know that back yonder across all these centuries of humanity, that as far as my little individual identity was concerned I have no awareness of existence. And I know quite as well that after this experience of death, this inevitable experience of death, this universal experience of death—every heart that is now beating and pumping blood through your veins and arteries and mine will some day come to that moment where it ceases to throb.

I remember reading, some years ago, that the great Gladstone, the great prime minister of England, was one time in his study leaning upon his study table, his head was on his hands and great thought and contemplation were written on his personality. An intimate friend entered that study and he saw this gigantic intellect in contemplation. He hesitated for a moment before he interrupted his thought and then as Mr. Gladstone became aware of his presence he turned to him —the reporter in telling of the incident tells us that the look on Mr. Gladstone's face he had never seen upon the face of mortal man —and as the friend turned to Mr. Gladstone he said this, "Mr. Gladstone, what were you thinking of? Of what importance was what you were thinking that it would command the great Gladstone, as it has commanded you?" And Gladstone turned to him and he said, "My friend, I was thinking of the first five minutes after death."

When I am called to those who are experiencing death and I stand by their side a moment before and I see the passing of their spirit, as I do very frequently, I stand stricken dumb in that presence. What is that that strikes me dumb? It is the race-long, the age-long hunger and passion that those we knew and loved, who lived a while, might speak. Now so changed, the heart is there, the brain is there the body is there, but they tell us they are dead; and that motivation of life, that which gave vitality, that which thought, that which pumped blood, that is all stilled. There is something natural in the human heart that rebels against that power that could so rob and so take from us that which was precious to our immortal hearts, and it is the beginning of that revolt against the universe that would be so constituted that this which we have loved a while and lost a while may be permanently alienated from our hearts and from our

love. There is something irrational, something utterly brutal in a conception of a universe that would permit death to be the end. There is something utterly foreign to every characteristic which we can give to love that would permit that thing to be final.

The Psalmists sang, and I sing it again with you tonight, "He has set eternity in their hearts." And the plane upon which you and I now live, between these two unknowns, that unknown which precedes birth and that unknown which follows death, both of which we are stricken dumb with any articulation of satisfaction at all; but in between those two unknowns there is the intuitional revolt and the heart revolt that this little space-consciousness, this time-consciousness that you and I have, that this poor old body of flesh and bone that you and I have, amenable to all the disintegration and decay and demoralization of earth—worth a little over two dollars when resolved to its chemical values and put in a little vial on the shelf of a chemist—that Shakespeare's brain, and the Lord Jesus' heart and the brain of Plato and the genuis of artists, painters, poets and dramatists that beautifies and makes lovely the universe in which we live, that this should be the development of thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, eighty or ninety years of life and then night let down her curtain from the sky and pinned with a star, a star that goes out at the grave, and men turn their faces and say there is no immortality. To prove it, that is another matter. To disprove it, that is another matter. To believe it adds dignity and worth to human life.

You who are pure literalists, you who are purely cynical, made so by the territory of the scientist who tells you that he has never been able to find the spark process, the life who takes the body into his laboratory and with his keenly adjusted instruments of reason and of science he pushes away the coverings of this old mortality, and after he has delved into the most secret places of your brain and after he has held your heart in his hand and explained to you its movements, after he has done all this, then he says, "But of life, what of that?" And where science closes, I begin in my belief in immortality.

I have come to the place, my friends, where I have no fear, none. I approach that hour of mine. I will approach it with awe, if I am aware of it, with great awe; but I shall not approach it with fear. I think that death is only another part of the same equation as birth, that it is just as natural and just as necessary. I am speaking now of the physical manifestations of disillusion that is spoken of as death. Then, too, let me say this to you: There was a time in your life and mine when if loving hands and loving hearts had not held us and fed us and clothed us and loved us, not a person within the sound of my voice or in this audience tonight would have survived birth. You were never so helpless as in birth, and not one of you has any memory of it. To you the experience did not exist, based upon knowledge. The hour of your birth, the pangs and the pains, the first eighteen, twenty, twenty-four, thirty, thirty-six months of space-time consciousness to you do not exist. No man or woman here can say, "I know then; I remember then." To you it is non-existent. The point I want to make is, there was a great power in your relationships and mine. Love, love cared. Love cared! Love cared enough so that every heart listening to these words has been brought to the place that you are tonight. Somebody cared for you; somebody loved you, and you are where you are in the world of identity because love had its way.

Why not accept that philosophy with death? Love had its way with my birth. Love will have its way with my death. And whether it is east, like Eben Holden in Irving Bachelor's beautiful story, whether it is east or whether it is west, whether it is north or whether it is south, I shall not be afraid, for there is no fear in love. Perfect love casteth out fear.

If instead of trying to prove immortality we would live as though we were immortal, death would lose its fear. Instead of trying to bring science, instead of trying to bring interpretation, instead of trying to bring these things into our lives, if we were to live, as I am attempting to live, upon the basis that we are immortal souls and that birth and death to an immortal soul are incidentals necessary to place the soul on the time-space consciousness and that when we are through with that consciousness, then whatever there is for us we shall meet with a heart for any fate and hope, that we shall be heroic enough to say with Browning, "Greet the unseen with a cheer." The only preparation to die is by being prepared to live.

I have stood beside many people in these past years and they have reached out their hands to me, they have held them tightly, they have looked into my eyes and they have said in the death gurgle, "I don't want to die. I am afraid to die." And inevitably I have made the discovery that those who were the most afraid to die were those who had wasted and dissipated life. When you throw away life and you violate life and you mutilate life, then you had well been fearful in the experience of death.

I do not know what is for me beyond this experience of adventure, but reason and a process of deduction tell me authoritatively that whatever is beyond for me will be made and constructed out of the materials of earth. We build our eternal character here and now. And what shall it be? What shall it be? Perchance every heart in this church tonight, now, by some catastrophe, should suddenly stop beating and for all of us it would be death, what have we to take into the adventure? Must some of us say when we face it, "Here is my little, shriveled, dwarfed, pinched, penurious life; here it is," and throw that back in the face of the cosmos? Must some of us, perhaps, who have been quite lavish with life, who have had much of its good things, many of its most rare things, have had all that we could have, money, fame, reputation, power; perhaps we have had it all, and when we come to meet the final test of eternal character we look back across these lives and there is not a single human heart anywhere that beats with sorrow because we have gone. We never lighted any face with a smile. We lived in the Hell of selfishness. We fed our own bodies. We established our own field of work and we lived life on the terms of this selfishness. What do you expect with immortality? Why should you live forever if you have not met the high trust of the fifty, sixty or seventy years that you had life; if you have wasted it; if you have squandered it; if you have fretted it away in the presence of the ephemoral and the transitory, if you have done this with life and then you want to prove that you are immortal, then you want to prove you live everlastingly? What right have you to demand of God that your soul be immortal if you have not created any favor for the very God you ask by the life you have lived?

What I am finally saying, my friends, is this, and this is the gist of my whole philosophy of immortality, that after all is said and done, the final satisfactory attitude is to pitch this life high, to pitch this life high! And I believe, tonight, with all my heart and with all my soul the words

of Plato, "No permanent harm can come to a good person in this world or in any other; that the permanent shield is the breastplate of righteousness; the permanent protection is the armour of goodness," and that if I can live these years of mine, be they long or short, so that somewhere there will be a rose in someone's garden, there will be a smile on the face of a little child, there will be someone that is lowly, someone that is lowly that shall miss me, someone that was heartbroken, that was hurt, whose heart was made new again; if I can make some little contribution to the loveliness of earth and to the grandeur of life—then when I feel the cold waters creeping up my ankles and my brow is covered with the cold beads of deathsweat and loved ones hover and whisper about me in that last moment, which science tells us is painless, the moment of passing, when that time comes I can face whatever the future hath, of marvel or surprise, with shoulders back and head up and eyes penetrating.

If I have honored this God of all nations, this God of all planets, if I have honored Him by the dignity and the beauty of living life nobly and well, I shall go sweeping on in the eons, my soul adjusting itself to its new environment, progressing ever onward, skyward, starward, until it climbs to the very heart of God, and Heaven will not be placed, will not be locationed: Heaven will be when God smiles and looks at us and we hear these words of beauty, "Well, you have done well, to live immortally is to love highly!"

THE SUPREME TRAGEDY

A Sermon Preached in The Peoples Church Good Friday by Dr. Bradley. Stenographically Reported.

There must be no thought of triumph tonight; there must be no exultation; there must be no hosannas—we are spectators of the supreme tragedy of the world. And irrespective of our theological loyalties, the churches to which we belong or do not belong, that heart is a heart of stone that cannot respond tonight to the depth of the tragedy. Youth has been slain; idealism has been defeated; victory is delayed; the most perfect heart that ever beat is in the silence of the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea.

Where is that little group who loved Him so much that the mighty militarism of the Roman soldier did not frighten them away? All the others fled. And when nature made her comment on the moment and the skies were darkened and the reverberations of the clouds were heard abroad on the land, and those who were in the temple saw the curtain rent in twain, all nature trembled, chaos and havoc and confusion—then a flash of lightning out of the sky and we see illuminated three crosses upon yonder hill—they all fled but those who loved Him. What is the test of love? Standing by when all the rest stand against. The heart of John who loved Him, the sons of Zebedee, Mary the Magdalen, and Mary, His mother, stayed at the foot of the cross. Those who wanted the chief seats in the administration of His kingdom, those who had mouthed most vociferously their loyalties, those who had trailed Him in the triumphal entry of last Sunday and strew palms in his pathway and gave hosannas to his ears,

scattered like cowards and they let Him die alone today. Only love stayed. Love is all that ever does stay. Convenience of friendships, pretentions of loyalty, sophistries of devotion, mouthings of support—all these are but the idle prattlings of the surface. When the storm breaks on life, who stands by? Those who love you if their love is love!

Where are those aching hearts tonight? Mary, the mother, left on the bosom of John, this gentle heart that couldn't stand the cross long. You know the interesting thing about this crucifixion is that most people who were crucified lived sometimes three and four days. It was not an uncommon thing for the Romans in their crucifixion to leave the crucified at the mercy of vultures and birds of prey and under the blazing heat of midday sun, before life had left the body, birds would pick out the eyes and there in the agony of these crucifixions they would attack the body before death had come. And sometimes some who loved them very deeply would hurry to the scene of the crucifixion and would make a mixture of vinegar and hyssop and put it on a sponge or cloth and on the end of a stick, would hold it up to the one being crucified and that would give temporary relief from the agony and the pain. It is not significant that this Poet, and this Man said, "No, I will not taste?" Don't you see He wanted the complete experience? Don't you see that He would not ask for any favors? Don't you see that He was willing to go straight through the ordeal without any help, even to the point where, in the intense suffering and tragedy of the moment, He looked at that darkened sky and He cried, "My Father, hast Thou too forsaken me?"

Show me greater anguish than this. Forget your Christ of the theologians; forget your God that was being crucified; forget all that the creeds and the churches have said about it and see this picture tonight, this tragedy, this drama, in the intensity of what it was. Most of them died in two days, three days. The historians have told us that there have been people crucified who lived six days, their friends bringing them ease and sustenance. But don't you see in the crucifixion no organs are fatally hurt? Don't you see that the nails just go through the flesh and through no vital part of the body? But this boy, this boy, youth, even though His muscles had been hardened by toil in a carpenter shop and even though there were probably callouses on the palms of His hands and even though He had walked miles, even though all this, it was only a matter of hours with Him —He couldn't stand it.

But there was another reason—a Roman soldier with a spear. Those who thought He might live on into the Sabbath and through their legalism and literalism, He might be able to live on into the Sabbath and thereby make the crime all the greater if this man should die on the Sabbath day, for night had not yet come. And then it was a Roman soldier took a spear, and walking to that sacred flesh, thrust it in His side. O Hate, where did you ever get the idea that you are stronger than Love? O Vengeance, when did it occur to you that you are stronger than Love?

Tonight I walk in the palace of the Caesars, feasting, drinking, licentiousness, the slaves pouring wine down sensuous gullets, food everywhere, jeering and hissing and the cry is, "We have killed Him, that Galilean rascal, that young revolutionist, that young pathological dreamer who dared think that He could make Himself king. Today we stripped Him and we have killed Him and He is hanging out there beside the city's gates, dead on the cross. On with the dance! On with the wine! Rome has been vindicated. The Caesars live forever!"

And I go to a little home. I think it was in Bethany; I don't know, the records are so fragmentary. All that we know about Him is the earliest was written forty years after the crucifixion took place, the very earliest is the story told in the Gospel of Mark. He Himself wrote nothing. He did —yes, He did. Pardon me; He did write, didn't He? He wrote on the sand, and the waves came up and obliterated what He wrote.

But I see another group. They have gone to Joseph and they asked for a tomb, and I can see John, the beloved, and I can see Joseph and the two Mary's. It was not a God that was killed this day to them. It was not a God that was killed this day to them. No, it was a son and a lover and a friend that was killed this day to them. Mary did not stop to ask about your trinities. Mary did not stop to build upon your conceptions of this, that and the other. And when Jesus in that last moment said as He looked at her, "Woman," and this the preachers don't say, please remember that when He said woman, it is the Aramaic term for endearment and the loveliest word that He could use to that mother. I have heard preachers use that sentence with almost a sense of gratitude that they would think that she was apart from Him. "Woman, my dear, behold thy son." And He turned His face to John and then to John He said, "Son, behold thy mother." This man upon a cross, between His friend and His mother, gave a new brith of relationship. And John took Mary, the mother of Jesus, to his heart and gave her a home as long as she lived. They were never separated again.

So tonight they have taken Him down from the cross. It was only a matter of an hour or a few hours at the most. They have wrapped Him in the grave clothes and they have put Him in the tomb. Only two things do I wish to emphasize in the sacredness of this moment, just two. The first is His capacity for human love—love. And when all the vengeance that Rome had and the high priests of the Jewish ecclesiasticism of the period had against Him, when they all did their worst and when they forced the issue and put Him to death, love stayed, broken life. That is what I want you to know tonight. Love is eternal. And the final thing is this: People say to me repeatedly, "Doctor Bradley, don't you believe in the divinity of Jesus? Doctor Bradley, don't you believe in the deity of Jesus?" All I say is this, that I have tried to go through the debris that has accumulated about Him. All the creeds, they are nothing to me, nothing. I have no altar at which to bow, none. All your man-made churches are nothing to me. I have no formula of religion. But I think—I may be wrong—I have found Him, and that is the only important thing. I think I have found Him. I know I love Him. And whatever God is—listen to this my friends—whatever God is, He must be like Him—such love, such sacrifice, such purity —whatever God is, I can see in the face of Jesus of Nazareth God.

And that isn't theology. No church would accept that. No priest or bishop would lay his hand upon my head and ordain me to preach that. Whatever God is, He is like this man.

Let us close all the books, all the scholastic papers that are written of him, all the universities, all that has been said, let's close it all, put it all aside. One thing remains. Do you want to know what it is? One thing remains. I will tell you; I will tell you tonight. One thing remains. This is what remains. Roman soldier, you have pierced My side. Don't you know that there is a nearer way to My heart than that? You who are casting lots

for My garments, the mocking garments, you who have pierced Me with these thorns that have brought these little beads of blood on My forehead, don't you know that there is forgiveness for you? Judas, come back. Come back, Judas. Poor Judas, with the jingling of money in your ears. Judas, I made you the treasurer of our little band. Judas, come back, come back! Judas, if I could tear My hands away from these nails, I would put my arms around you.

The supreme test of Jesus, to me, is found in almost His last word, "Father, Father, forgive them. Don't, don't be severe. Forgive them. They don't know what they are doing." And His head fell on His breast and it is said He gave up the spirit.

God, what a man!

CORT THEATER MEETINGS

The Peoples Church of Chicago, with Dr. Bradley as the preacher, held noon services every noon during Holy Week in the Cort Theater downtown. Six different Lenten services were held at the same time in the loop. This was the first time in the religious life of the city that one church has ever attempted a loop Lenten service. The theater was graciously donated by Mr. U. G. Hermann and the meetings were so successful that they will be made an annual event. It rained every day of the meetings but splendid congregations assembled. On Good Friday noon the theater was filled. Miss Dorothy Schultz, Mrs. Frank Benham and Mr. James Griffin were the soloists while Mr. Emerson Abernethy was in charge of the music, rendering a very effective solo on the opening day. Mr. Walter Flandorf presided at the organ. Hundreds of radio friends attended the services and the ministry of the church was greatly extended by the services. We are grateful to all who contributed so generously to their support.

DR. BRADLEY IN SYRACUSE

For the fourth consecutive season Dr. Bradley was the preacher for the Civic Lenten Services of Syracuse, New York. He opened his series on April 1st and preached every noon for four days in Keith's Theater to great congregations. One evening he preached in the First Presbyterian Church of Syracuse, one evening in Oswego, N. Y. and one evening in May Memorial Church. The Syracuse Lenten Services are known thruout the East as the most successful services held during the Lenten season. Dr. Cadman preceeded Dr. Bradley on the program and Dr. Shannon of Chicago followed him. Mrs. Bradley accompanied our pastor and shared with him the great spiritual uplift of the visit. At the close of the services Dr. Bradley was invited back for next season and he promised to go. While in the east he met many radio listeners. He made the journey as the guest of the New York Central Railroad thru the courtesy of Mr. Grant Johnson of the President's Office. The reception and hospitality extended by the city of Syracuse, Dr. A. H. Fulton, in charge of the arrangements, and the New York Central Railroad, will always remain an inspiring memory to Dr. and Mrs. Bradley.

EASTER IN THE PEOPLES CHURCH

Easter morning and a pouring rain! Who can remember when we had an Easter of perfect weather? Yet by 10:45 for the morning service every seat was occupied and hundreds were being turned away. The ushers permitted nearly 300 people to stand in various places thruout the auditorium. Never in the history of the church did we ever have such a service of interest, beauty and musical excellency. 2000 people were in the sound of Dr. Bradley's voice in the visible audience while no one can esti-

mate the number of the radio audience. 135 new members were received into membership — the largest number of new members ever to be received into the church at one time.

The church was artistically decorated with an abundance of beautiful flowers every one of which was presented to the church by members and friends under the chairmanship of our devoted floral chairman, Mrs. Georgia Russell, who from her hospital bed, secured the floral offerings.

The musical program presented by our chorus choir of sixty five voices under the direction of Mr. Emerson Abernethy was one never to be forgotten. Our organist Mr. Walter Flandorf in appropriate organ numbers added to the service a note of inspiration and joy.

At the evening service every seat was filled and the congregation was one of the most appreciative of the year. With this service Dr. Bradley brought to a close the Sunday evening services which have been so successful. The Sunday evening service is not a problem in our church. Since the evening services started on the first Sunday evening in December until Easter night they have met with unprecedented response from the people. They will be a regular feature of the winter activities of the church and will begin as usual for the next year. No effort at the unusual or sensational is employed for the evening services. The services have been kept a distinctly religious service and have followed the same plan as the morning. Our Easter services will never be forgotten by those who were fortunate to attend or hear them. Both of the sermons preached by Dr. Bradley on Easter Sunday are published in full in this issue of The Liberal.

To the Board, the ushers for their expert handling of the crowds, the members of the Chorus Choir, Mr. Abernethy, the director, and Mr. Flandorf, the organist and to Mr. and Mrs. Harrison, who were responsible for the perfect working out of myriads of details, we are permanently obligated. The success of our work is not to be explained in one or two personalities but in the fine co-operation of our entire church organization. It was the happiest day in our ministry!

THE WOMAN'S CLUB

April is a busy month for everybody. Housecleaning, moving, decorators, measles—and I'm not sure but that measles are preferable to decorators! We need to keep our hearts pretty high above the cloud of pests (mentioned above) in order to feel the real beauty of the springtime! Have you not thrilled at the notes of the robin? Have you looked in speechless joy at the western sky aglow with the indescribable tints of a spring sunset? Have you breathed in ecstacy the first perfumed balmy breath of spring? If you have—then you have opened your heart and mind to the Divine Decorator, who will not worry you with the wrong shade of paint, or mess up your house, but will bathe your very soul clean in the beauty of sunshine!

The Club programs continue in excellence, and those who do not avail themselves of the good things they offer are missing something.

On April 6, the Educational Department presented Mr. Chas. Unnewehr, Principal of Continuation Schools, who gave an interesting talk. At noon a five course luncheon was served by the Commonwealth Edison Co., demonstrating electric cooking utensils, etc. Card tables were attractively set for the luncheon, and a hundred women were present. Mrs. R. T. Logeman assisted by her group arranged the affair and are to be congratulated upon the success and charm of the day. A

Bridge party followed the luncheon, and to add fun and novelty to the occasion a "fortune teller" in costume told fortunes in a tray of sand.

April 21, Mrs. Donald C. Witt spoke on the "Loan Scholarship Fund." Luncheon was served by Mrs. Wahlman's, Mrs. Storfer's and Mrs. Thomas's groups. It being Foreign Relations Day in our year book, ten foreign born women were the guests of the Club, coming with their English teacher from the Hale School. The teacher told about these women and their desire to learn our language, and all about the Civic work of this country. She asked four or five women to say a few words as best they could, and they did remarkably well.

The annual meeting of the Woman's Club will be held April 28.

G. T. B.

PASTOR'S CALENDAR

Dr. Bradley kept the following engagements during March:

March 2, Two Sermons, Peoples Church.

March 5, Address, Greek Citizens.

March 6, Address, Central High School, South Bend, Ind.

March 9, Two Sermons, Peoples Church.

March 9, Address, Czechoslovak Dinner.

March 10, Board Meeting, Peoples Church.

March 10, Board Meeting, Chicago Public Library.

March 12, Address, South Shore Community Church.

March 13, Address, Parent Teacher Association, Senn High.

March 14, Address, Des Plaines, Ill.

March 16, Two Sermons, Peoples Church.

March 17, Woman's Club, Peoples Church.

March 17, Address, Laymen's League.

March 18, Address, Milwaukee Rotary Club.

March 18, Address, H. O. Stone Auditorium.

March 19, Address, LaPorte, Indiana.

March 20, Dinner, Peoples Church.

March 21, Address, Muncie, Ind.

March 23, Two Sermons, Peoples Church.

March 24, Address, Batavia, Ill.

March 25, Address, Music Teacher's Meeting.

March 27, Address, Roanoke, Virginia.

March 29, Garden Luncheon, Hotel Sherman.

March 30, Two Sermons, Peoples Church.

Funerals

March 1, Mr. William Tuttle. Interment, Rosehill.

March 3, Mr. Emil J. Benzinger. Interment, Memorial Park.

March 3, Mrs. Charles McCurdy. Interment, Rosehill.

March 7, Mr. Fred Klein. Interment, Graceland.

March 8, Mr. John Abel. Interment, Rosehill.

March 8, Mrs. Von Sothern. Interment, Montrose.

March 10, Mrs. Mervin H. Weborg. Interment, Memorial Park.

March 11, Mr. James McGeehan. Interment, Acacia Park.

March 14, Mrs. J. Hovland. Interment, Rosehill.

March 15, Mrs. J. F. Hecht. Interment, Rosehill.

March 19, Mrs. Frank Baur. Interment, Rosehill.

March 31, Mr. Bert Thayer. Interment, Mt. Carmel.

Weddings

March 15, Frank Snell and Sadie Johnson.

March 20, Edward Loyce and Mildred E. Kirby.

March 29, Harry R. Beckstrom and Freida I. Clark.

THE PEOPLES CHURCH

LAWRENCE AVE., Near Sheridan Rd.

Sundays—10:45 A. M.

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REGULAR EVENTS

School of Religious Education Sundays, 9:30 a. m., Channing Hall.

Woman's Club—Every Monday,

Men's Forum—Second Monday evenings, Channing Hall.

Young People's Club—1st and 3rd Tuesday evenings in Channing Hall.

Church Trustees Meeting—Second Monday evenings.

Pastor's Cabinet — First Monday evening.

NEW MEMBERS

The Peoples Church publicly received the following new members on Easter Sunday:

Mrs. Callie Jeanne Stillson-Abel, 1321 Columbia Ave.

Mr. and Mrs. Elmer F. Adams, 6444 N. Rockwell St.

Mr. LeRoy Adams, 6444 N. Rockwell St.

Mrs. Mary B. Allen, 5223 Kenmore Ave.

Mrs. George S. Anderson, 5236 Cuyler Ave.

Mr. H. B. Austin, 715 S. Wood St.

Mr. Stowell C. Avery, 3039 East 91st St.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Thos. Bell, 4435 N. Winchester Ave.

Miss Grace Bigelow, 811 Lawrence Ave.

Miss Evelyn Blaul, 5876 Ridge Ave.

Mrs. Theo. Blaul, 5876 Ridge Ave.

Miss Clara Bloyel, 2817 Abbot Court.

Miss Julia E. Britton, 4877 Kenmore Ave.

Dr. and Mrs. E. J. Buchan, 452 Briar Place.

Dr. S. C. Buchan, 452 Briar Place.

Mrs. Marie Corless, 917 East 44th St.

Mr. Wm. Dankwardt, 4400 N. Hermitage Ave.

Miss Myrtle Dolson, 2104 Leland Ave.

Miss Helen Elfstrom, 4436 Christiana Ave.

Miss Doris Engman, 3507 N. Keeler Ave.

Mr. and Mrs. R. T. Engman, 3507 N. Keeler Ave.

Mr. and Mrs. John Farr, 1048 Dakin St.

Miss Muriel E. Forsland, 7018 North Rockwell St.

Mr. and Mrs. George Formanek, 7259 Rhodes Ave.

Mr. George Formanek, Jr., 7259 Rhodes Ave.

Mr. Martin Formanek, 7259 Rhodes Ave.

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That faith is a possibility, an education, and a finder of hope—

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That contentment with all is the soul's highest crown, most steadfast anchor, and supremest conquest—

That God is a nearness, a surrounding, and a fulness of satisfaction—

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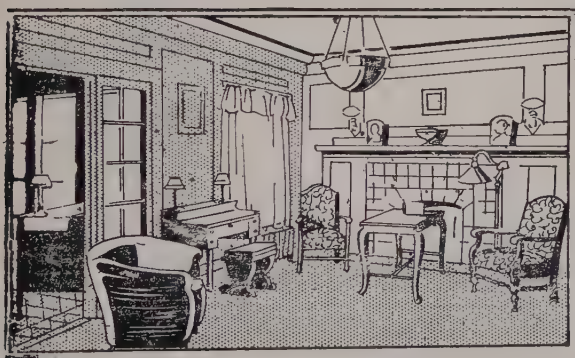

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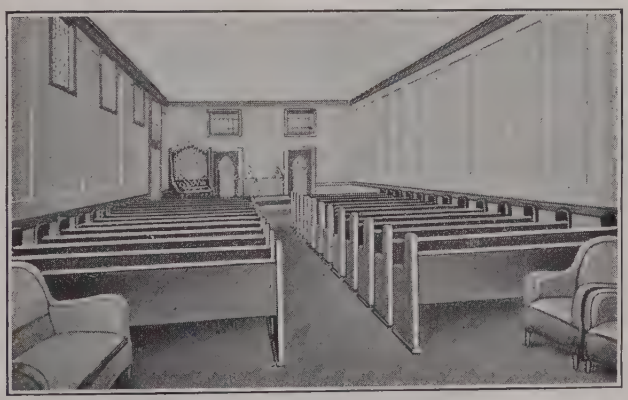

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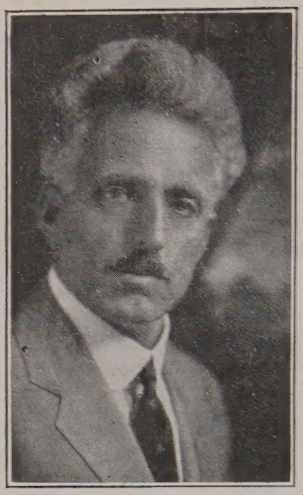

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